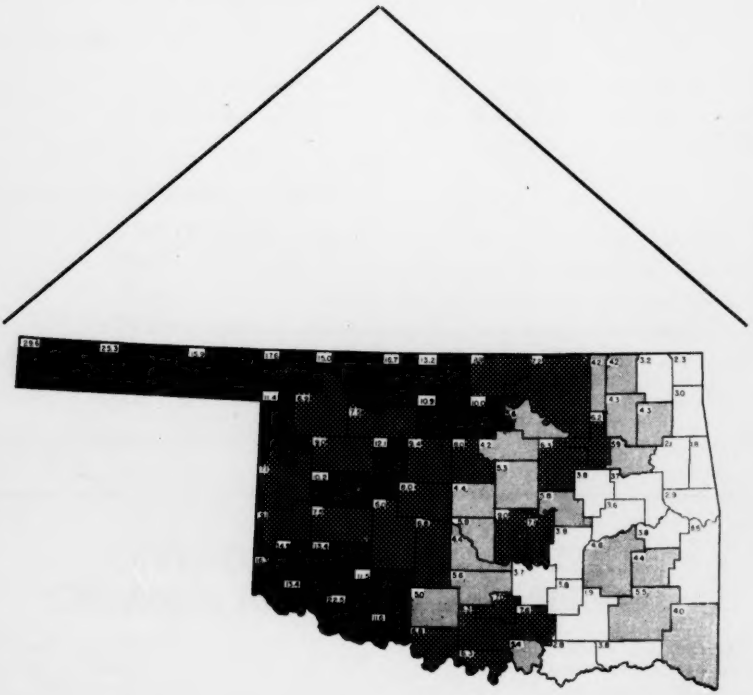
Vol. 25 No. 5 October, 1952

OKLAHOMA

Current Farm Economics



Percent of absentee farming in Oklahoma, 1950, by counties. (See page 86.)

Current Farm Economics

OKLAHOMA

Vol. 25 October, 1952 No. 5

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General

Prices

The September average of all prices received by Oklahoma farmers was up 1.9 percent over the level of September, 1951. The index of consumer prices in August was up slightly more than 3 percent above August 1951, and retail food prices during the same period in the United States were up 3.7 percent.

However, the increase in consumer food costs has not been due to any increase in agricultural prices. In the food bracket so far as agriculture is concerned, meat animal prices were only 80.9 percent of the level in September, 1951, and chickens and eggs were only 94.2 percent of that level. Although there was an increase of 8.7 percent in the prices received for dairy products, the weighted average of all livestock and livestock products in September, 1952 was 13.4 percent below the September, 1951 level. Wheat, which contributes more directly to the cost of human food, was fractionally lower in September this year than it was a year earlier. Potatoes continue much higher this year than last.

In addition to these specific changes in prices, the general average of all farm products prices was raised by the fact that feed grain prices were higher than they had been a year earlier. While these increases in feed prices raise the level of the average prices received by farmers, they also constitute additional costs to the livestock producers.

While prices at the consumer level have increased during recent months and while prices received for farm products in general have been weakening, the index of purchasing power of Oklahoma farm products (ratio of prices received by farmers to prices paid) shows an improvement of about 1 percent per month since July. This apparent contradiction is due to the fact that prices have been lower for feeder livestock. These livestock prices naturally are included in the U.S.D.A. index of prices paid by farmers for production items. Some reduction in the index of prices paid by farmers is also effected by decreases in the prices of vegetables and meat, which are included in the farm family living items in the index.

In Oklahoma, in contrast with the Corn Belt for example, a reduction in feeder livestock prices represents not so much a reduction in prices paid by farmers as a reduction in prices received by an important part of the state's producers. Whether lower feeder prices is an advantage or a disadvantage depends on whether one is a buyer or a seller of feeders. On the balance, therefore, the reduction in prices paid by farmers

and the improvement in the purchasing power index do not apply to Oklahoma as a whole.

All production items except livestock, and building and fencing supplies have risen in recent months.

General Business Conditions

There is evidence pointing to continuing high levels of business activity in the immediate future, but the upward pressure of prices has lessened considerably and the fear of extreme further inflation has been reduced.

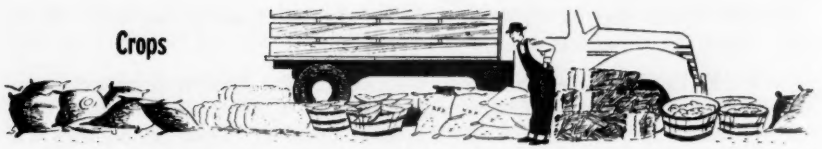
Business analysts continue to emphasize the risks in heavy investments that will take a long time to pay off. Some business recession is possible for the latter half of 1953.

However, maintenance of the general price level for the time being is favored by an increasing tendency for consumers to reduce their rate of saving and to spend more from current income. The volume of unfilled orders at the manufacturing level is a strengthening factor, and the prospect is for some increase in the rate of government spending for defense until the middle or latter half of 1953 when the peak is likely to be reached.

The prospects for farming appear to be sound for the immediate production period. Prices may average somewhat lower than in the past two years, but they should be high enough to assure profitable operation if production is organized efficiently. The speculative gains from the rising price levels of the past few years will not, however, continue to be enough to compensate for serious errors in judgment. Increasing emphasis will be placed on efficient long-run operations.

Land Prices and Credit

Land prices have reacted to the halt in the upward movement of farm products prices. The number of farms sold continues to decline, and the land boom may be over. There is some tightening of credit, but the availability of mortgage credit should not be an important factor in any slackening of land prices. Loan costs may increase but if availability of credit were to become a more important factor, it would more likely occur in the field of short-term or operating credit.—**G. P. Collins.**



Cotton

Apparently the uncertainty characteristics of the cotton situation, especially at this time during the season, is present in a somewhat greater degree than usual this year. The major factors of uncertainty appear to be:

1. The extent of military activity that could occur in the future in Korea;

2. Domestic and export demand with or without considerable additional military procurement; and

3. The uncertainty relative to the size of the United States crop under conditions of extremely variable weather in the different cotton production regions of the cotton belt.

Any major change of one or a combination of these factors may have considerable immediate influence on the demand for or available supply of cotton. Such a change would, therefore, likely be reflected in a change in the price of cotton.

Indicated production for the United States, based on October 1 crop conditions, was about 14.4 million bales. This compares with an estimate of about 13.9 million bales as of September 1, or an increase in estimated production of about 5 hundred thousand bales. *

The disappearance, as projected for the 1952-53 marketing season, is estimated at from 13.3 to 14.6 million bales. This estimate includes domestic consumption of 9.3 to 9.8 million bales and exports of 4 to 4.8 million bales. **

With domestic production for the 1952-53 season at about 14.4 million bales and a carryover of about 2.7 million bales on August 1, 1952, and imports estimated at about 150 thousand bales, the cotton supply in the United States for this season is estimated at about 17.2 million bales. The carryover on August 1, 1953, based on these estimates, will probably be about 2.7 to 3.9 million bales compared with 2.3 and 2.7 million bales on August 1, 1951 and 1952, respectively.—**Raymond B. Marshall.**

Wheat

Oklahoma wheat producers are much concerned with the lack of

* U.S.D.A., B.A.E., Crop Reporting Service, October 8, 1952.
** U.S.D.A., B.A.E., *The Cotton Situation*, August, 1952.

moisture which has existed since before the 1952 wheat harvest. From this angle the prospects are poor.

U. S. Production.—The present supply in the United States is large. Indicated production of all wheat for 1952 was 1,298 million bushels, with winter wheat accounting for 1,063 million bushels. Total production was the second largest on record, exceeded only by the 1947 production of 1,359 million bushels.

Oklahoma Production.—For Oklahoma, the 1952 production was the largest on record. The total of 109 million bushels was approximately 5 million bushels more than the previous high in 1947.

U. S. Supplies.—The total supply in the United States for the 1952-53 crop year will be considerably more than the total of domestic needs and exports. In addition, the carryover at the end of the year will be approximately twice as much as a year earlier.

Total supplies for this year are approximately 1,577 million bushels, the third largest on record. The supplies consist of the new production, a carryover of 254 million bushels, and likely imports of 25 million bushels. *

U. S. Utilization.—The wheat used in the United States will approximate 700 million bushels in 1952-53, with 500 million bushels used for food. This amount is almost constant from year to year. Significantly, however, per capita consumption of wheat for food is declining—188.6 pounds in 1951 as compared with 227.1 pounds in 1936. Uses for feed will be about 115 million bushels, and for seed, 88 million.

Wheat exports likely will be down this year. If they are as high as 325 million bushels, the carryover next July 1 will be around 550 million bushels—and possibly more. This suggests the possibility that large supplies may push down heavily on prices, which will be greatly dependent on government loan levels.—**Adlowe L. Larson.**

The national feed situation continues to appear favorable in comparison to recent years, but this is small consolation to local areas where shortages are acute because of dry weather. It means only that feeds

* *The Wheat Situation*, August-September, 1952, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, p. 6.

are available somewhere in the country if the feeder can find them and arrange a way to pay for what he needs to buy.

United States feed grain production prospects October 1 (corn, oats, barley, and grain sorghums) indicate a 3-percent larger crop than in 1951 and 2 percent larger than the 10-year average, 1941-50. With by-product feed supplies estimated at slightly less than last year and allowance for a slight decrease (less than 3 percent) in the numbers of grain-consuming livestock, this means a total concentrate feed supply of about 1,940 pounds per animal unit. This is the same as last year's supply and exceeds the usual rate of consumption by about one-fourth, which would leave a reasonably safe margin of carryover.

Such a situation would cause little concern if supplies and needs were somewhat proportionately distributed over the country. While prospects are good to excellent in most of the cornbelt, the lake states, the northeast, and the mountain and pacific states, they are very poor in the mid-south and southern plains areas (Figure 1). Typical of the situation is the production of grain sorghums in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas, where four-fifths or more of the commercial supply is normally produced, which is estimated at only 40 percent of 1951.

The hay problem is also largely one of distribution. The national crop is only 5 percent less than last year's big crop and exceeds the 5-year average production by 5 percent. Even with increased numbers of hay-eating animals, this is a supply of 1.6 tons per animal unit. Last year's

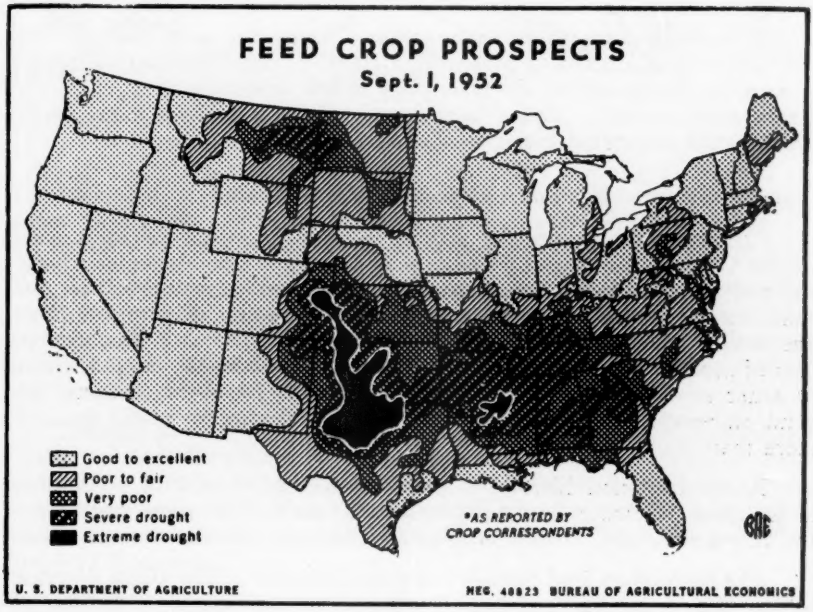


Figure 1.

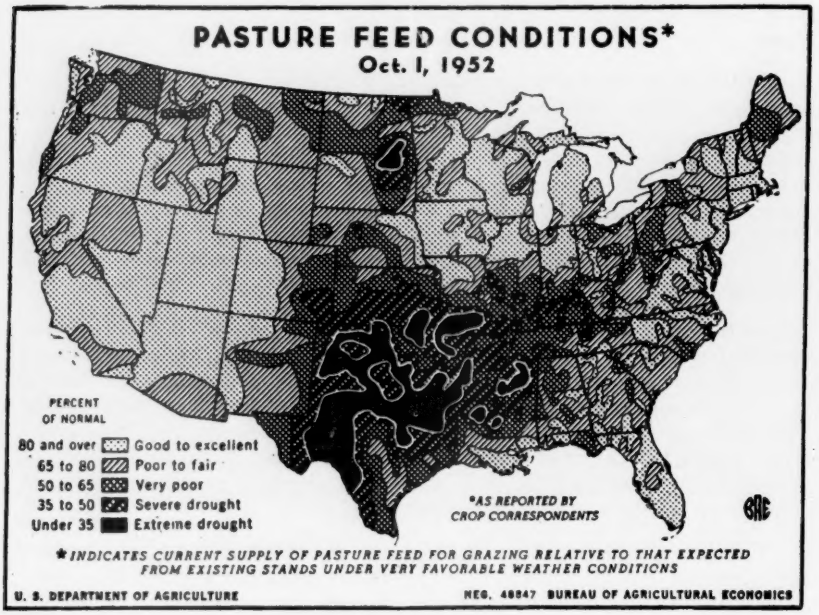

PASTURE FEED CONDITIONS*
Oct. 1, 1952
PERCENT OF NORMAL
80 and over Good to excellent
65 to 80 Poor to fair
50 to 65 Very poor
35 to 50 Severe drought
Under 35 Extreme drought
*AS REPORTED BY CROP CORRESPONDENTS
*INDICATES CURRENT SUPPLY OF PASTURE FEED FOR GRAZING RELATIVE TO THAT EXPECTED FROM EXISTING STANDS UNDER VERY FAVORABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NEG. 49847 BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Figure 2.

record rate of disappearance amounted to 1.5 tons per animal unit. The government's program of providing hay transportation to drought- stricken areas at approximately the farm price in the producing area represents a substantial subsidy. This program may mean survival for many herds which would otherwise be shipped out at a sacrifice.

Pasture Conditions Poorest in Years

Pasture conditions are the poorest in many years. Nationally, conditions October 1 averaged 67 percent of normal—14 points under a year ago and 12 points below the 10-year average for that date. Most serious conditions are found in the West South Central region (Figure 2). Average condition in the entire South Central region October 1 was 46 percent of normal—lowest for 38 years. In most of Oklahoma, no fall wheat or other sowed pastures are expected. Prospects for spring grazing depend on weather conditions to January 1. This situation will demand more than the customary amount of hay feeding.

Range condition likewise is poor, averaging 58 percent of normal in Oklahoma October 1, as compared to 80 percent last year and 81 for the 10-year average. Water supplies are also reported low in some areas.

The by-product feed situation appears favorable. The slight decrease of less than 2 percent in supply is almost proportionately distributed among cottonseed cake and meal, animal proteins, grain and other by-

product feeds. The high protein feed supply averages 155 pounds per animal unit, or about the same as each of the two preceding years.

Firm to Rising Feed Prices Expected

Feed prices are expected to continue firm to rising, owing to strong demand. Sixty percent of the corn and two-thirds of the total feed grain carryover were held under loan or owned by the Commodity Credit Corporation. As feed demands increase and prices strengthen, these proportions will decline. September 15 corn prices on Illinois farms averaged 2 cents per bushel under those of the same date a year ago, although oats and soybeans were higher.

With a large crop in prospect, harvest-time prices for corn may remain seasonally low for a time but are almost sure to advance after harvest. Practically the entire crop is of excellent quality and of low moisture content. Lowest prices are to be expected in October and in the first part of November. Farmers needing feed grains and equipped with safe storage facilities may save money and trouble by obtaining the bulk of their supply during the harvest period. Once it is stored or under loan in the cornbelt, farmers will be reluctant to move it except for advanced prices.—**F. L. Underwood.**

Beef Cattle

Increased production, greater marketings, and lower prices as compared to last year are the major developments in the beef cattle situation. No appreciable price rise is expected for feeder cattle in the near future.

Cattle slaughter in the last 30 to 40 days has been slightly above last year. Many of the cattle marketed from ranges and pastures have moved as feeders to the Corn Belt, where the biggest corn crop in four years is in prospect. Some estimates indicate that the volume of cattle feeding this year may be the biggest on record.

Drought prevailed in June, July and early August in many Southern States, much of New England, the Southern Plains, and scattered areas elsewhere. With rain occurring in some sections and with disaster loans for farmers authorized, there was little selling of cattle breeding herds. However, young stock was sold earlier, at lighter weight, and in greater numbers than usual.

Although Oklahoma suffered from drought conditions, cattle sales —except for heavy marketings within short intervals—have not been exces-

sive. Cattle receipts at Oklahoma City, for example, during August and September ranged only 14 to 15 percent above the same months a year ago (Table 1). It may be noted, too, that the increase during August and September of 1952 over the same period of 1951 was much smaller than the increase from February to June of 1952. During this

Table I.—Stockyard Receipts of Salable Cattle and Calves at Oklahoma City for Selected Periods of 1952; with Comparisons.*

Period	1951		1952		Percent change from 1951	
	Cattle	Calves	Cattle	Calves	Cattle	Calves
January	43364	5321	39655	3994	— 9	—25
February	26363	2771	39018	2920	+48	+ 5
March	27631	3204	43721	3332	+58	+ 4
April	27808	2747	36930	3475	+33	+26
May	21934	2380	34370	3456	+57	+45
June	23645	4903	45306	4928	+92	+ 0.5
July	57781	12932	65068	7649	+13	−41
August	71890	18420	82406	13621	+15	−26
September**	69326	17748	78908	17447	+14	− 2
TOTAL	369742	70426	465382	60822	+26	−14

* Compiled from "Comparative Receipts and Shipments of Livestock," Oklahoma National Stockyard Company, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, January 1, 1952-August 31, 1952.

** "Weekly Livestock Market Report," United States Department of Agriculture, Production and Marketing Administration, Livestock Branch, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Vol. XXXV, January 1, 1952-October 3, 1952.

Table II.—Stockyard Receipts of Salable Cattle and Calves at 12 Markets for Selected Weeks of 1952, with Comparisons.*

Week Ending		1951		1952		Percent change from 1951	
		Cattle	Calves	Cattle	Calves	Cattle	Calves
Aug.	8	174998	33508	211102	31095	+20	− 7
	15	182533	35255	203654	29422	+12	−17
	22	195562	37213	200241	28661	+ 2	−23
	29	197886	40100	253088	38747	+28	− 3
Total for Aug.		750979	146076	868085	127925	+16	−12
Sept.	5	184634	35770	263374	46213	+43	+29
	12	229596	41559	215515	34023	− 6	−18
	19	233295	40477	280476	47188	+20	+17
	26	241329	45664	258613	40964	+ 7	−10
Total for Sept.		888854	163470	1017978	168388	+14	+ 3
Oct.	3	230979	46117	244334	45116	+ 6	− 2
TOTAL		1870812	355663	2130397	341429	+14	− 4

* Compiled from "Weekly Livestock Market Report," United States Department of Agriculture, Production and Marketing Administration, Livestock Branch, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Vol. XXXV, January 1, 1952-October 3, 1952.

Table III.—Prices Received by Producers for Steers and Calves by Classes and Grades at Oklahoma City, Week Ending October 3, 1952, with Comparisons.*

Item	Grade	Weight	Week Ending 1951**	Week Ending 1952	Percent change from 1951
			Dollars per cwt.		Percent
Slaughter					
Steers	Ch.	700-900	34.75	30.25	−13
	Ch.	900-1100	35.00	30.00	−14
	Gd.	700-900	32.25	26.00	−19
	Gd.	900-1100	32.50	25.75	−21
	Comm'l.	All Wts.	29.00	21.50	−26
	Utility	All Wts.	25.50	16.00	−37
Calves	Ch.-Pr.	500-down	33.50	22.60	−32
	Comm'l. & Gd.	500-down	30.00	18.40	−39
Stocker & feeders					
Steers	Gd.	500-800	32.05	23.20	−28
	Gd.	800-1050	30.70	21.90	−29
	Med.	500-1000	27.70	18.90	−32
	Com.	500-900	24.00	14.90	−38
Calves (steers)	Gd. & Ch.	300-500	34.90	26.20	−25
	Med.	300-500	28.20	19.40	−31

* Compiled from "Weekly Livestock Market Report." United States Department of Agriculture, Production and Marketing Administration, Livestock Branch Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Vol. XXXV, October 3, 1952.

** October 5, 1951.

earlier period, 1952 receipts ranged from 33 to 92 percent above the 1951 levels. As compared to receipts at the 12 major U. S. markets, the 1952 August-September increase in Oklahoma City was about the same. (Tables 1 and 2).

Calf receipts at Oklahoma City were approximately one-fourth less than during August a year ago and 2 percent lower than September of last year (Table 1). This compares with an increase of 3 percent in September 1952 receipts at the 12 major markets. However, increases in monthly calf receipts from February to June of 1952 as compared to 1951 ranged from 0.5 to 45 percent. Thus, total calf receipts through October 3 was down only 4 percent from last year.

Cattle prices received by Oklahoma farmers and ranchers have declined most on the lower grades. Commercial slaughter calves during the week ending October 3, 1952 were selling 39 percent below 1951 (Table 3). Common stocker and feeder steers had dropped 38 percent from 1951 prices. On the other hand, choice slaughter steers were selling around $30 per hundredweight, a decline of only 13 percent from 1951. While price drops on stocker-feeder steers have exceeded declines for slaughter steers, the reverse is true for calves. Slaughter calf prices (Ch.-Pr. and Comm'l.) have dropped 32 to 39 percent since last year. Good, choice, and medium stocker-feeder calves have declined from 25 to 31 percent as compared to a year ago.

It is clearly evident that the demand from buyers is weaker because of the decline in prices of slaughter cattle, and the below-average returns earned by feeders last season. Although some firming is possible in prices of feeder cattle, no appreciable increase is expected until after the main marketing season is over.—**Robert L. Tontz and Durward Brewer.**

Dairy

During August, 1952 the total U. S. milk production of the nation's 25½ million milk cows was 3 percent less than for the same month in 1951. This was 209 pounds of milk per capita. Total production was about 13 percent below the 10-year average.

These figures indicate the present trends in total milk production for fluid and other purposes. As fluid prices are usually the most profitable to producers, much of the decrease has been in manufacturing milk. The accumulated decline in butter production for the nation up to October 2 was over 50 million pounds, or 5 percent under 1951 and 10 percent under the 5-year average of 1946 to 1950. Up to September 25, 1952, American cheese manufacture was 30 million pounds less than for the same period of 1951. This production is 4 percent under the 1951 record and 5 percent under the 5-year average, 1946-1950.

For the southwestern and southern part of the United States, fluid milk prices will continue strong during the 1952-53 winter because of high consumer demand and the shortage and high price of feed.

Milk prices are being advanced in most markets to encourage production. These efforts will help but will not completely supply the markets. Class I milk prices at Oklahoma City for October have been set at $6.67 per 100 pounds of 4 percent milk. The uniform price for 100 pounds of 4 percent milk was $6.43 for September, 1952.

High labor and feed costs have played an important role in curbing the expansion of milk production relative to other farm enterprises. In addition, the relatively high prices of some farm products, notably beef, have been important and have attracted many dairymen away from milk production. However, this situation is being modified. Recent declines in beef prices, together with higher prices of milk, should strengthen the relative position of milk production.

The present prices of milk, which many consumers feel are too high, together with high costs should stimulate the adoption of new techniques for the production and distribution of milk. It is probable that labor-saving devices will be more evident in the 1953 dairy enterprise on the farm. Also bulk transportation, a relatively new development in Oklahoma, may contribute toward a reduction in the cost of assembly and distribution of milk in this area.—**A. W. Jacob.**

Hogs

The number of hogs marketed during the next two to three months will increase seasonally with the expected low in hog prices coming in December. This reduction in price probably will be no larger than usual and may average the same as last fall. *

The level of hog production and slaughter this fall likely will be smaller than a year earlier which, in the absence of other changes, would have strengthened hog prices. However, the demand for hogs has weakened on two counts. First, the increased slaughter of beef and veal has resulted in lower beef prices. Lower beef prices will create increased competition for the consumers' meat dollar which in turn will tend to stop any important increase in pork prices. Second, the prices of lard are lower. Lower lard prices will tend to weaken the prices paid for hogs.

This combination of lower beef prices and lower lard prices will just about offset the price-strengthening effect of smaller numbers of hogs marketed this fall. Consequently, hog prices may average little, if any, above the prices for the same period of a year earlier.

As of last June, farmers intended to farrow a 9 percent smaller pig crop this fall. On the basis of this estimate, the lower level of hog slaughtering probably will continue into 1953.—**Leo. V. Blakley.**

Poultry

The price increases for eggs and broilers have been encouraging (Table 1). However, they were seasonal primarily and do not represent an expansion of demand or a stronger market in general. Despite these substantial increases since May, when eggs were 28.5 and broilers were 19 cents, current prices remain below the level of 1951.

There is no conclusive evidence that prices for the next two months, October and November, will improve much beyond the present level. The only possibility is a slight advance in egg prices, whereas broiler prices will reflect the competition of the increased marketings of other types of meat.

Full-scale movement is expected soon for the largest turkey crop on record. Producers are finding a ready market at slightly lower prices than last year. The September price to Oklahoma producers was 28.4 cents compared with 30 cents last year. With reduction in the number of slaughter hogs plus a decrease in broilers and hens moving to market this fall, it is possible the seasonal price for the next three months will follow the pattern of 1951, that is, one which increased throughout the marketing season.—**K. C. Davis.**

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* *The Livestock and Situation*, B.A.E., U.S.D.A., July-August, 1952, p. 10.

TABLE I—Egg Prices Received by Oklahoma Farmers, January, 1942 to September 1952.
(Cents per dozen)

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Av.
1942	30.2	24.8	25.0	24.4	25.7	27.0	27.0	27.5	29.4	31.4	33.2	34.7	28.4
1943	35.4	33.3	32.9	32.4	32.9	33.3	32.6	32.6	34.3	37.5	39.0	39.6	34.6
1944	32.4	31.6	29.7	26.0	26.7	27.0	28.0	28.5	29.9	32.6	38.6	41.1	31.0
1945	37.5	31.2	30.7	30.8	30.5	31.1	32.3	33.5	30.0	35.0	44.7	45.5	34.4
1946	37.5	29.4	30.1	29.7	30.0	30.0	32.0	32.0	40.0	44.0	41.0	43.0	34.9
1947	38.1	35.1	36.0	37.5	36.5	36.7	38.3	37.4	43.6	47.8	47.7	57.6	41.0
1948	44.3	39.7	38.3	38.3	35.4	36.4	37.0	38.0	41.7	46.0	52.0	53.0	41.6
1949	43.0	40.5	37.9	38.3	38.4	36.7	36.5	38.4	42.4	46.0	46.1	40.9	40.4
1950	28.4	27.6	27.8	26.3	26.1	25.9	26.4	29.4	32.9	36.5	40.5	59.2	32.2
1951	37.5	36.7	37.1	38.4	39.3	35.6	35.7	37.2	48.8	49.4	51.4	52.5	41.6
1952	37.7	27.9	28.2	28.6	28.5	28.7	33.0	39.9	44.3				

SOURCE: "Prices Received by Farmers," Mid-Monthly Release, Agricultural Statistics Division, B.A.E., U.S.D.A., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

TABLE II—Chicken Prices Received by Oklahoma Farmers, January, 1942 to September 1952.
(Cents per pound)

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Av.
1942	14.8	15.3	15.8	16.1	16.8	16.8	15.9	16.7	17.9	17.8	17.2	17.7	16.6
1943	19.0	19.8	20.7	22.1	22.1	22.6	22.3	21.7	22.0	22.3	22.5	21.9	21.6
1944	21.9	22.2	22.2	21.4	21.5	21.8	21.8	21.4	22.0	21.4	21.4	22.1	21.8
1945	21.8	22.1	22.5	23.2	24.0	24.7	24.9	25.8	22.8	21.8	20.9	21.4	23.0
1946	21.6	21.6	21.7	22.4	23.5	23.4	25.5	23.4	24.0	27.0	21.9	22.4	23.2
1947	22.4	21.2	23.0	23.8	23.5	22.2	22.0	22.0	22.5	23.4	22.1	21.6	22.5
1948	22.2	22.4	23.0	24.0	24.0	26.0	28.2	25.7	27.0	26.4	25.8	28.0	25.9
1949	27.0	27.0	26.2	28.1	24.8	21.6	20.0	20.4	20.6	19.8	19.9	19.7	22.9
1950	17.3	18.2	19.5	19.3	18.4	18.4	18.4	20.8	19.6	19.2	19.5	19.7	19.0
1951	21.0	23.6	25.0	25.5	25.7	22.5	22.5	20.7	28.7	21.2	21.2	21.0	22.6
1952	21.4	21.0	22.8	21.6	18.4	18.9	19.7	20.2	22.0				

SOURCE: "Prices Received by Farmers," Mid-Monthly Release, Agricultural Statistics Division, B.A.E., U.S.D.A., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

TABLE III—Poultry Ration Cost Per 100 Pounds, to Oklahoma Farmers, January, 1942 to September 1952. (Dollars)

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Av.
1942	2.01	2.07	2.13	2.12	2.11	2.11	2.10	2.17	2.16	2.14	2.16	2.20	2.12
1943	2.37	2.39	2.45	2.53	2.60	2.63	2.71	2.77	2.75	2.77	2.82	2.86	2.64
1944	2.91	2.92	2.92	2.95	2.96	2.91	2.88	2.87	2.78	2.71	2.71	2.69	2.85
1945	2.72	2.73	2.76	2.79	2.78	2.80	2.84	2.86	2.85	2.89	2.91	2.94	2.82
1946	2.96	3.02	3.10	3.11	3.35	3.49	3.84	3.81	3.63	3.58	3.63	3.47	3.42
1947	3.39	3.42	3.77	3.85	3.85	3.81	3.94	4.08	4.35	4.42	4.53	4.76	4.01
1948	4.92	4.36	4.47	4.56	4.48	4.34	4.17	3.77	3.51	3.43	3.45	3.53	4.08
1949	3.52	3.41	3.45	3.52	3.45	3.29	3.33	3.32	3.29	3.27	3.25	3.30	3.37
1950	3.29	3.29	3.34	3.45	3.53	3.45	3.53	3.56	3.44	3.34	3.39	3.52	3.43
1951	3.65	3.78	3.76	3.86	3.86	3.77	3.79	3.78	3.76	3.83	4.00	4.12	3.82
1952	4.16	4.14	4.09	4.12	4.10	3.98	4.03	4.12	4.16				

TABLE IV—Egg-Feed Price Ratios, Oklahoma.* (Pounds of poultry ration** equal in value to one dozen eggs)

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Av.
1942	10.0	12.0	11.7	11.5	12.2	12.8	12.9	12.7	13.6	14.7	15.4	15.8	12.9
1943	14.9	13.9	13.4	12.8	12.7	12.7	12.0	11.8	12.5	13.5	13.8	13.8	13.2
1944	11.1	10.8	10.2	8.8	9.0	9.3	9.7	9.9	10.8	12.0	14.2	15.3	10.9
1945	13.8	11.4	11.1	11.0	11.0	11.1	11.4	11.7	10.5	12.1	15.4	15.5	12.2
1946	12.7	9.7	9.7	9.5	9.0	8.6	8.3	8.4	11.0	12.3	11.3	12.4	10.2
1947	11.2	10.3	9.5	9.7	9.5	9.6	9.7	9.2	10.0	10.8	10.5	12.1	10.2
1948	9.0	9.1	8.6	8.4	7.9	8.4	8.9	10.1	11.9	13.4	15.1	15.0	10.0
1949	12.2	11.9	11.0	10.9	11.1	11.2	11.0	11.6	12.9	14.1	14.2	12.4	12.0
1950	8.6	8.4	8.3	7.6	7.4	7.5	7.5	8.3	9.6	10.9	11.9	16.8	9.4
1951	10.3	9.7	9.9	10.0	10.2	9.4	9.4	9.8	13.0	12.9	12.8	12.7	10.8
1952	8.6	6.7	6.9	6.9	7.0	7.2	8.2	9.7	10.6				

SOURCE: "Prices Received by Farmers," Mid-Monthly Release, Agricultural Statistics Division, B.A.E., U.S.D.A., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

* These ratios are not indicative of and must never be interpreted as "cost of production." They include only cost of feed, and all other costs of production are in addition.

** Poultry feed ration: percentages of specified feeds include commercial mash, 32.7 percent; home mixed mash, 11.2; commercial scratch, 4.0; corn, 14.0; wheat, 16.3; oats, 9.9; barley, 1.3; sorghum grain, 10.6 percent. Individual producers' ration cost may be more or less than the above stated costs as estimated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. In case poultry-ration cost and egg prices for producers in any community differ from those shown in Table III and Table I, respectively, the actual ratios can be calculated by dividing actual egg prices per dozen by feed costs.

Sheep, Lambs, and Wool

The price of slaughter lambs in September was well below that of a year earlier and is likely to continue on a lower level, although a moderate seasonal advance might occur. Slaughter of lambs and sheep has also been well above the levels of a year earlier, because farmers have been holding back fewer sheep and lambs for feeding and breeding purposes. The past two-year trend of increasing numbers of sheep and lambs on farms may be halted if the present slaughter rate continues to any great extent.

The 1952 lamb crop was 2 percent larger than the 1951 crop but small compared to earlier years. The increase occurred entirely in the native states with the 13 western states showing a slight decrease. Texas, the leading sheep state, had a 10 percent smaller lamb crop than a year ago.

Wool.—The 1952-53 wool marketing season opened in Australia on September 1, with prices ranging 5 to 10 percent below last June closing prices but between 15 and 20 percent above the March low levels. Prices since then have fluctuated near the opening levels.

Prices of domestic wool declined in mid-September at the Boston market to levels well below the corresponding loan values, and substantial quantity has gone under loan. Consumption of apparel wool through July, 1952 was about 21 percent below that of corresponding months of last year, while imports of apparel and carpet wools during the same period have been less than those of a year earlier.—**Ivan W. Janssen.**

Absentee Farming in Oklahoma, 1950

Absentee farming, sometimes termed "suitcase" and "sidewalk" farming, is a development of the twentieth century and is dependent upon the developments in modern transportation. Historically, most farmers have lived on the farm in this country, and they have found it necessary because the farming operations may demand attention at any hour of the day or any season of the year. However, with automobiles and good roads the farmer can commute daily at little loss of time to and from the farm he operates.

Number of Absentee Farmers

The number of farmers not living on the farm they operate increased from 8,240 to 9,910 between 1945-1950—an increase of 20 percent. The significance of this trend becomes more apparent when it is realized that the total number of farms in the state declined from 164,790 to 142,246. Thus, the percentage of absentee farmers increased from five percent to seven percent of the total number of farms in this five-year period.

Distribution.—The most important type of agriculture found in Oklahoma at present which is really adaptable to absentee farming is the production of wheat. Figure 1 shows that it is in the wheat areas where there is a high percentage of farmers not residing on the place being farmed. Furthermore, the number is rapidly increasing.

In sections of Western Oklahoma where wheat is raised extensively and these operations are highly mechanized, it becomes possible for the farmer to spend only a small portion of his time on the farm with no sacrifice of production. If he does not want to use the wheat pasture it can be leased. Consequently, a business or professional man can be a "sidewalk" farmer, or an established farmer may live in town most of the year, packing his "suitcase" and going to the farm for a short period to prepare the soil and plant the crop each fall. In early summer, he can again spend a short period of time on the farm to harvest the crop.

In any type of agriculture there are some who do not live on the farm being operated. In some such instances the farmer may be living in a house in the vicinity of his own farm, which has no improvements. Therefore, as shown on the map, in all counties there are some farmers who do not live on the place they farm. The U. S. Census returns reveal, however, that off-the-farm living tends to be on the decline in all areas of Oklahoma except the wheat sections.

Analysis of the 1950 Census of Agriculture also shows absentee farming to be far more important than the number of such farmers would indicate. These absentee operators tend to have large land holdings and produce far more than the average resident farmer in the state. Many have a relatively small investment in agricultural land and farm improvements, because a high percentage of them own no land and usually rent the land on a crop-share arrangement.

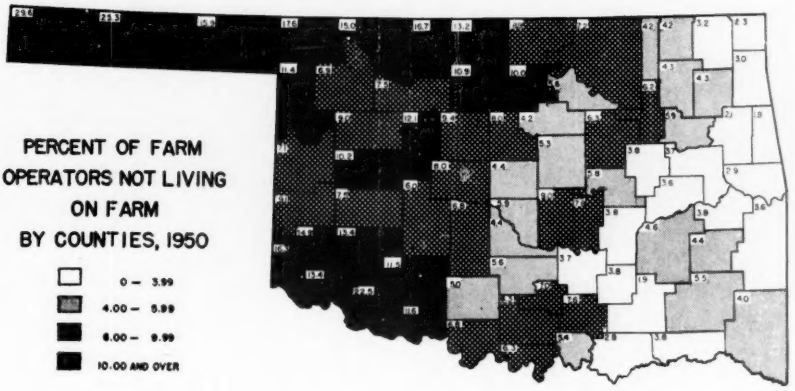

Figure 1.

Where Do They Live?

Since the "suitcase" farmer does not live on the farm, the question arises as to where he does live. Recently released census reports show than in 1950, 2,703 employed farmers lived in the cities (towns with populations above 2,500) of Oklahoma and 5,658 lived in the rural nonfarm areas. These rural nonfarm residents live in suburban areas outside large cities, nonfarms in the open country, and especially in towns having under 2,500 inhabitants. There are other people living in these rural nonfarm areas who operate farms, but because they have other businesses or employment taking more of their time than farming the census does not classify them as farmers.

The cities having the greatest numbers of farmers living in them in 1950 (in decreasing order of importance) were: Oklahoma City, Alva, Frederick, Altus, Enid, Guymon, and Hobart. It may be noted that all are in central and western Oklahoma near wheat-growing regions. It is also significant to show the number of farmers living in Oklahoma cities increased from 1,490 in 1940 to 2,703 in 1950—in other words, nearly doubled.

The number of farmers living in the small towns with less than 2,500 inhabitants and other rural nonfarm areas of the state increased from 3,496 in 1940 to 5,658 in 1950. Data were not available to show in which small towns these people lived, but counties which had the greatest concentration of farmers having rural nonfarm residences (in decreasing order of importance) were: Texas, Caddo, Tillman, Jackson, Oklahoma, Alfalfa, Grant, and Washita—all in the western part of Oklahoma.—**John C. Belcher.**

Prices Received by Farmers, Price Indexes, and Indexes of Purchasing Power of Oklahoma Farm Products (1910-1914=100)

	Prices				Price Indexes				Purchasing Power Indexes[1]			
	1951	1952			1951	1952			1951	1952		
	Sept.	July	Aug.	Sept.	Sept.	July	Aug.	Sept.	Sept.	July	Aug.	Sept.
	(Dollars)				(Percent)				(Percent)			
Grain					242	237	246	251	85	82	85	87
Wheat (bu.)	2.15	1.99	2.07	2.14	250	231	241	249	88	80	83	86
Corn (bu.)	1.47	1.85	1.86	1.79	226	285	286	275	79	99	99	95
Oats (bu.)	.90	.89	.97	.99	200	198	216	220	70	69	75	76
Barley (bu.)	1.24	1.30	1.39	1.40	210	220	236	238	74	76	82	82
Rye (bu.)	1.60	1.70	1.75	1.80	187	198	204	210	66	69	70	73
Grain Sorghums (bu.)	1.19	1.51	1.60	1.68	175	222	235	247	61	77	81	85
Cotton and Cottonseed					292	314	321	331	102	109	111	114
Cottonlint (lb.)	.324	.350	.360	.371	287	310	318	328	101	108	110	113
Cottonseed (ton)	66.00	68.00	67.00	69.00	337	347	342	352	118	120	118	122
Miscellaneous Crops					229	285	322	349	80	99	111	121
Potatoes, white (bu.)	1.70	3.00	3.00	3.00	153	270	270	270	54	94	93	93
Potatoes, sweet (bu.)	2.55	3.50	3.50	4.25	207	284	284	345	73	99	98	119
Hay, all loose (ton)	24.50	25.90	32.00	34.60	278	294	363	392	98	102	126	136
Total Crops					272	285	294	303	95	99	102	105
Meat Animals					483	436	420	391	169	151	145	135
Cattle (cwt.)	27.00	23.90	22.60	21.20	559	495	468	439	196	172	162	152
Calves (cwt.)	31.00	27.20	26.00	23.90	519	456	436	400	182	158	151	138
Sheep (cwt.)	14.50	8.40	8.10	9.00	314	181	176	194	110	63	61	67
Lambs (cwt.)	28.50	25.80	26.40	24.00	489	443	453	412	172	154	157	142
Hogs (cwt.)	20.30	20.20	21.20	19.10	288	287	301	271	101	100	104	94

Prices and Indexes, Cont'd.

	Prices				Price Indexes				Purchasing Power Indexes[1]			
	1951	1952			1951	1952			1951	1952		
	Sept.	July	Aug.	Sept.	Sept.	July	Aug.	Sept.	Sept.	July	Aug.	Sept.
	(Dollars)				(Percent)				(Percent)			
Dairy Products					264	270	272	287	93	94	94	99
Milk, wholesale (cwt.)	4.95	4.90	5.05	5.40	256	254	262	280	90	88	91	97
Butter (lb.)	.68	—	—	—	304	—	—	—	107	—	—	—
Butterfat (lb.)	.61	.65	.65	.68	261	278	278	291	92	96	96	101
Chickens and Eggs					260	192	222	245	91	67	77	85
Chickens (lb.)	.207	.197	.202	.220	220	210	215	234	77	73	74	81
Eggs (doz.)	.488	.330	.399	.443	274	185	224	249	96	64	78	86
Total livestock and Livestock Products					396	357[2]	354	343	139	124[2]	122	119
All Commodities					309	307	312	315	108	106	108	109

SOURCE: Compiled by Dept. Agri. Econ., Oklahoma A. and M. College, from data supplied by Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U.S.D.A., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Washington, D. C.

For previous years, see Oklahoma Agri. Exp. Sta. Bull. 238, *Oklahoma Farm Price Statistics and Current Farm Economics*, Okla. Expt. Sta. Series 49, Vol. 13, Nos. 1 and 2, Feb.-Apr., 1940. Tables 16-19, and subsequent issues.

[1] The ratio of prices received by farmers to prices paid by farmers for commodities used in living and production.

[2] Revised.

—Ann H. Carter.

Price Indexes in the United States and Oklahoma and Indicators of Changes in Domestic Demand

Year and Month	PRICE INDEXES Average 1910-14=100					INDICATORS OF CHANGES IN DOMESTIC DEMAND	
	Index of Prices Received by Farmers		Index of Prices Paid by Farmers	All-Commodity Index of Wholesale Prices	Oklahoma Hog-Corn Price Ratio[2]	Index of Demand Deposits	Index of Factory Payrolls[5]
	Oklahoma[1]	United States	United States	United States		Oklahoma[3, 4] 1923-25=100	1947-1949=100
1926	134	145	155	146	16.44	102.0	
1927	134	139	153	139	14.54	100.5	
1928	151	149	155	141	10.72	100.3	
1929	145	146	153	139	10.65	92.3	
1930	112	126	145	126	11.04	77.4	
1931	71	87	114	107	14.30	60.6	
1932	51	65	98	95	14.59	47.3	
1933	65	70	99	96	7.36	44.9	
1934	90	90	112	109	4.73	53.3	
1935	107	108	117	117	10.35	60.8	
1936	109	114	116	118	9.33	74.6	
1937	111	121	123	126	11.36	82.1	
1938	82	95	116	115	15.64	84.9	
1939	84	93	121	113	11.33	89.4	29.9[6]
1940	92	98	128	114	8.61	92.0	34.0[6]
1941	117	122	130	127	13.77	86.6	49.3[6]
1942	152	157	152	144	14.35	107.4	72.2[6]
1943	172	188	167	150	11.69	162.3	99.0[6]
1944	181	195	176	152	10.56	215.9	102.8[6]
1945	184	202	181	154	11.95	285.3	87.8[6]
1946	226	233	203	177	11.56	335.3	81.2[6]
1947	286	278	246	222	13.34	348.5	97.7[6]
1948	293	287	264	241	12.69	353.3	105.1[6]
1949	257	251	253	226	15.00	347.4	97.2[6]
1950	272	256	261	236	14.25	346.8	111.2
1951	334	302	284	267	12.88	273.1	129.2
1951 Sept.	309	291	285	258	13.80	268.0	130.9
Oct.	319	296	287	259	13.23	276.6	129.8
Nov.	335	301	288	259	11.03	286.0	129.8
Dec.	328	305	288	258	9.89	291.3	132.9
1952 Jan.	321	300	289	258	9.45	292.3	130.4
Feb.	310	289	290	255	9.55	286.1	131.0
Mar.	312	289	289	251	9.56	284.1	131.9[6]
Apr.	317	290	289	251	9.22	283.1	128.1[6]
May	314	293	289	252	10.83	277.4	128.2
June	310	292	289[6]	250	10.61	284.7	126.8
July	307	295	288	250	10.92	301.7	
Aug.	312	295	289	252	11.40	303.9	
Sept.	315	281	289	250	10.67		

SOURCES: Indexes of Oklahoma prices received by farmers, computed by Dept. Agri. Econ., Okla. Agri. Exp. Sta., Stillwater, Oklahoma. Indexes of U. S. prices received and prices paid by farmers and indexes of U. S. wholesale prices, from *Agricultural Prices*, Bur. of Agri. Econ., U.S.D.A., Washington, D. C. Indexes of demand deposits in Oklahoma, calculated by Dept. Agri. Econ., Okla. Agri. Exp. Sta., from data furnished by Federal Reserve Board, Washington, D. C. Indexes of factory payrolls, from U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington, D. C.

[1] Prices received by Oklahoma farmers for 21 commodities. For data prior to 1926 see Okla. Agri. Exp. Sta. Bul. No. 238.

[2] These figures indicate the number of bushels of corn that could be purchased with 100 pounds of live hogs at current Oklahoma prices received by farmers.

[3] Demand deposits of Oklahoma member banks of the Federal Reserve System located in places under 15,000 population.

[4] Index numbers based on net demand deposits prior to 1936 and upon gross demand deposits since that date. For a discussion of this index see CURRENT FARM ECONOMICS, Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station Series 49, Vol. 13, Nos. 1 and 2. Feb.-Apr. 1940. p. 41.

[5] Unadjusted for seasonal variation.

[6] Revised.